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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/004,822

Applicant(s)

Allan Alcorn

Examiner

Matthew Smithers

Group Art Unit

2767



☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Jan 9, 1998

☐ This action is **FINAL**.

☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire three (3) month(s), or thirty days, whichever is longer, from the mailing date of this communication. Failure to respond within the period for response will cause the application to become abandoned. (35 U.S.C. § 133). Extensions of time may be obtained under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Disposition of Claims

☒ Claim(s) 1-40 is/are pending in the application.

Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

☒ Claim(s) 1-40 is/are rejected.

☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement.

Application Papers

☒ See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.

☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.

☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

☐ All ☐ Some* ☐ None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been

☐ received.

☐ received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) _____.

☐ received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*Certified copies not received: _____

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

☒ Notice of References Cited, PTO-892

☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). 4,10

☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413

☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948

☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

— SEE OFFICE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES —

DETAILED ACTION

Title

The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371 of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

Claims 1-2, 6-7, 21-22, 27, 34-38 and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. patent 5,762,552 granted to Vuong et al.

Regarding claim 1, the patent to Vuong meets the claimed limitation as follows:

"An electronic gaming system for enabling one or more player terminals, disposed at locations remote from a host server, to communicate with the host server in a secured transactional mode

wherein the host server is informed as to the location of the player terminals so that it can permit or deny game play based in part on geopolitical or geographical restrictions, comprising:

a communications medium;

at least one player terminal apparatus disposed at a first location and including electronic game playing means for enabling a player to enter player identification data, to make a wager by inputting wager data, to commence game play by causing a start play signal to be generated, and to receive an indication of the game play results in the form of a response signal,

electronic locating means for generating location data indicating the present location of said player terminal apparatus and for generating time data evidencing universal time,

first encryption means for encoding said player identification data, said wager data, said location data and said time data, and for decoding said response signal, and

first communication means responsive to said start play signal and operative to transmit the encoded data to said communications medium; and

host server means disposed at a second location remote from said first location and including second communication means for receiving the encoded data transmitted through said communication medium;

second encryption means for decoding the transmitted encoded data and for encoding a response signal, and

means for using the decoded identification data, wager data, location data and time data to determine the eligibility of the player, and if the player is qualified, to generate a response signal to be encoded and returned to said player terminal apparatus through said

communications medium.” see column 4, line 63 to column 5, line 23, column 6, lines 9-48, column 7, line 66 to column 8, line 27 and column 15, line 56 to column 16, line 49.

Regarding claim 2, the patent to Vuong meets the claimed limitation as follows:

“An electronic gaming system as recited in claim 1 wherein said game playing means includes a microprocessor, operating system software, and game software which, when processed by said microprocessor, develops electronic data for driving a display means that generates graphical images depicting game play.” see column 8, lines 28-51.

Regarding claim 6, the patent to Vuong meets the claimed limitation as follows:

“An electronic gaming system as recited in claim 1 wherein said electronic locating means includes a radio navigation means responsive to input signals broadcast from multiple geostationary transmitting sources and operative to calculate position coordinates constituting said location data.” see column 6, lines 29-39.

Regarding claim 7, the patent to Vuong meets the claimed limitation as follows:

“An electronic gaming system as recited in claim 6 wherein said game playing means includes a microprocessor, operating system software, and game software which, when processed by said microprocessor, develops electronic data for driving a display means that generates graphical images depicting game play.” see column 8, lines 28-51.

Regarding claim 21, the patent to Vuong meets the claimed limitation as follows:

“An electronic gaming terminal for disposition at a location remote from a host server and for communicating with the host server in a secured transactional mode, over an unsecured communications medium, informing the host server as to the location of the gaming

terminal so that the host server can permit or deny game play by the player based in part on predetermined geopolitical or geographical restrictions, comprising:

electronic game playing means for enabling a player to enter player identification data, to make a wager by inputting wager data, to commence game play by causing a start play signal to be generated, and for receiving an indication of game play results in the form of a response signal;

electronic locating means for generating location data indicating the present location of said gaming terminal and for generating time data evidencing universal time;

encryption means for encoding said player identification data, said wager data, said location data and said time data, and for decoding a response signal; and

communication means responsive to said start play signal and operative to transmit the encoded data to a host server via a communications medium.” see column 4, line 63 to column 5, line 23, column 6, lines 9-48, column 7, line 66 to column 8, line 27 and column 15, line 56 to column 16, line 49.

Regarding claim 22, the patent to Vuong meets the claimed limitation as follows:

“An electronic gaming terminal as recited in claim 21 wherein said game playing means includes a microprocessor, operating software, and game software which, when processed by said microprocessor, develops electronic data for driving a display means that generates graphical images depicting game play.” see column 8, lines 28-51.

Regarding claim 27, the patent to Vuong meets the claimed limitation as follows:

“An electronic gaming terminal system as recited in claim 21 wherein said game playing means includes a microprocessor, operating software, and game software which, when processed by said microprocessor, develops electronic data for driving a display means that generates graphical images depicting game play.” see column 8, lines 28-51.

Regarding claim 34, the patent to Vuong meets the claimed limitation as follows:

“An electronic terminal for disposition at a location remote from a host server and for communicating with the host server in a secured transactional mode over an unsecured communications medium informing the host server as to the location of the terminal so that the host server can permit or deny remote user access to the host server via said terminal based at least in part on predetermined geopolitical or geographical restrictions, comprising:

electronic transaction entry means for enabling a user to enter user identification data, to enter transactional data, to commence transactional communication by causing a start signal to be generated, and for receiving an indication of completion of the transaction in the form of a response signal;

electronic locating means for generating location data indicating the present location of said terminal and for generating time data evidencing universal time;

encryption means for encoding said user identification data, said transactional data, said location data and said time data; and

communication means responsive to said start signal and operative to transmit the encoded data to a communications medium for communication to a host server.” see column 4,

line 63 to column 5, line 23, column 6, lines 9-48, column 7, line 66 to column 8, line 27 and column 15, line 56 to column 16, line 49.

Regarding claim 35, the patent to Vuong meets the claimed limitation as follows:

“A gaming method for enabling one or more players, disposed at locations remote from a gambling casino, to communicate over on unsecured communications medium with the casino in a secured transactional mode wherein the casino is informed as to the location of the player terminals so that it can permit or deny game play based in part on geopolitical or geographical restrictions, comprising the steps:

generating player identification data;

generating wager data;

generating location data indicating the present location of said player;

generating universal time data;

encoding said player identification data, said wager data, said location data and said time data;

**transmitting the encoded data to the casino through a communications medium; and
receiving the encoded data at said casino;**

decoding the transmitted encoded data and

**using the decoded identification data, wager data, location data and time data to
determine the eligibility of the player, and if the player is qualified, generating a response
notifying the player that he may commence game play.”** see column 4, line 63 to column 5, line 23,

column 6, lines 9-48, column 7, line 66 to column 8, line 27 and column 15, line 56 to column 16, line 49.

Regarding claim 36, the patent to Vuong meets the claimed limitation as follows:

“A gaming method as recited in claim 35 and further comprising the steps of:

**commencing game play by extracting graphics data from a storage medium and
sending a notice of play commencement to the casino;**

**using the extracted graphics data to generate graphical images of the game play
for display to the player;**

**using random number generating means at the casino to generate a game result
and forwarding the said game result to the player; and**

using the forwarded result to indicate to the player the result of his wager.” see
column 8, lines 7-51.

Regarding claim 37, the patent to Vuong meets the claimed limitation as follows:

**“A gaming method as recited in claim 36 wherein said location data is obtained by accessing
radio signals transmitted by geostationary navigational transmitters, and by using the radio
signals to compute player position coordinate information corresponding to said location data.”**
see column 6, lines 29-39.

Regarding claim 38, the patent to Vuong meets the claimed limitation as follows:

**“A gaming method as recited in claim 37 wherein said time data is also obtained by accessing
said geostationary transmitters.”** see column 15, line 56 to column 16, line 49 .

Regarding claim 40, the patent to Vuong meets the claimed limitation as follows:

“A gaming method as recited in claim 36 and further comprising the steps of:

**opening a player account with the casino prior to commencing game play; and
following each generation of a game result, crediting the player account in the event of a
positive result, and debiting the player account in the event of a negative result.”** see
column 15, line 56 to column 16, line 49.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 3-4, 8-9, 11, 14, 17-19, 23-24, 26, 28, 30 and 39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 5,762,552 granted to Vuong et al and further in view of U.S. patent 5,643,086 granted to Alcorn et al.

Regarding claim 3, Vuong et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 2), however, Vuong fails to specifically teach the operating system software and the encryption software are stored in ROM memory. Alcorn teaches an electronic casino gaming apparatus in which a ROM unit is used to store the operating system and the encryption algorithms (see

column 7, lines 9-25). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Alcorn's electronic casino gaming apparatus with Vuong's interactive real-time network gaming system for the purpose of authenticating the programs stored in the memory unit (see Alcorn; column 3, line 58 to column 4, line 19).

Regarding claim 4, Vuong et al and Alcorn et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 3), in addition, Alcorn teaches authentication procedure used in the electronic casino gaming apparatus (see column 9, lines 27-58).

Regarding claim 8, Vuong et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 7), however, Vuong fails to specifically teach the operating system software and the encryption software are stored in ROM memory. Alcorn teaches an electronic casino gaming apparatus in which a ROM unit is used to store the operating system and the encryption algorithms (see column 7, lines 9-25). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Alcorn's electronic casino gaming apparatus with Vuong's interactive real-time network gaming system for the purpose of authenticating the programs stored in the memory unit (see Alcorn; column 3, line 58 to column 4, line 19).

Regarding claim 9, Vuong et al and Alcorn et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 8), in addition, Alcorn teaches authentication procedure used in the electronic casino gaming apparatus (see column 9, lines 27-58).

Regarding claim 11, Vuong et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 1), however, Vuong fails to specifically teach using a public/private key system. Alcorn teaches an

encryption/decryption process using a private key/public key technique (see column 2, line 66 to column 3, line 12). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Alcorn's electronic casino gaming apparatus with remote terminals with Vuong's interactive real-time network gaming system for the purpose of improving the security of the gaming system.

Regarding claim 14, Vuong et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 4), however, Vuong fails to specifically teach using a public/private key system. Alcorn teaches an encryption/decryption process using a private key/public key technique (see column 2, line 66 to column 3, line 12). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Alcorn's electronic casino gaming apparatus with remote terminals with Vuong's interactive real-time network gaming system for the purpose of improving the security of the gaming system.

Regarding claim 17, Vuong et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 1), however, Vuong fails to specifically teach using a public/private key system. Alcorn teaches an encryption/decryption process using a private key/public key technique (see column 2, line 66 to column 3, line 12). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Alcorn's electronic casino gaming apparatus with remote terminals with Vuong's interactive real-time network gaming system for the purpose of improving the security of the gaming system.

Regarding claim 18, Vuong et al and Alcorn et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 17), in addition, Alcorn includes a CD-ROM means for containing the gaming software (see column 3, lines 6-10).

Regarding claim 19, Vuong et al and Alcorn et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 18), in addition, Alcorn teaches authentication procedure used in the electronic casino gaming apparatus (see column 9, lines 27-58).

Regarding claim 23, Vuong et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 22), however, Vuong fails to specifically teach the operating system software and the encryption software are stored in ROM memory. Alcorn teaches an electronic casino gaming apparatus in which a ROM unit is used to store the operating system and the encryption algorithms (see column 7, lines 9-25). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Alcorn's electronic casino gaming apparatus with Vuong's interactive real-time network gaming system for the purpose of authenticating the programs stored in the memory unit (see Alcorn; column 3, line 58 to column 4, line 19).

Regarding claim 24, Vuong et al and Alcorn et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 23), in addition, Alcorn teaches authentication procedure used in the electronic casino gaming apparatus (see column 9, lines 27-58).

Regarding claim 26, Vuong et al and Alcorn et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 24), in addition, Vuong includes a radio navigation means responsive to broadcast signals from a geostationary transmitting source (see column 6, lines 29-39).

Regarding claim 28, Vuong et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 27), however, Vuong fails to specifically teach the operating system software and the encryption software are stored in ROM memory. Alcorn teaches an electronic casino gaming apparatus in which a ROM unit is used to store the operating system and the encryption algorithms (see column 7, lines 9-25). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Alcorn's electronic casino gaming apparatus with Vuong's interactive real-time network gaming system for the purpose of authenticating the programs stored in the memory unit (see Alcorn; column 3, line 58 to column 4, line 19).

Regarding claim 30, Vuong et al and Alcorn et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 28), in addition, Alcorn teaches an encryption/decryption process using a private key/public key technique (see column 2, line 66 to column 3, line 12).

Regarding claim 39, Vuong et al and Alcorn et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 38), in addition, Alcorn teaches an encryption/decryption process using a private key/public key technique (see column 2, line 66 to column 3, line 12).

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 5,762,552 granted to Vuong et al and further in view of U.S. patent 5,586,937 granted to Menashe.

Regarding claim 5, Vuong et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 1), however, Vuong fails to specifically teach using a personal identification number assigned to a

particular player. Menashe teaches players who wish to play games of chance from a remote site are allocated a personal password in order to access the system (see column 6, lines 2-18). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Menashe's interactive computerized gaming system with remote terminals with Vuong's interactive real-time network gaming system for the purpose of monitoring, tracking and auditing the activity of a player's account.

Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 5,762,552 granted to Vuong et al and further in view of U.S. patent 5,323,322 granted to Mueller et al.

Regarding claim 10, Vuong et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 6). Vuong teaches a VSAT transmission network (see column 6, lines 29-31) but fails to specifically teach a global positioning satellite locating system. Mueller teaches VSAT (very small aperture terminals) datalinks operate by using satellite transmissions from a GPS constellation (see column 13, column 28-36). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Mueller's networked GPS system with Vuong's interactive real-time network gaming system for the purpose of monitoring and tracking the location of a player to ensure that the player is abiding by the rules of their particular jurisdiction.

Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 5,762,552 granted to Vuong et al and further in view of U.S. patent 5,643,086 granted to Alcorn et al and U.S. patent 5,586,937 granted to Menashe.

Regarding claim 12, Vuong et al and Alcorn et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 11), however, both fail to specifically teach using modems in the network. Menashe teaches modems connected to each computer to facilitate communication between the computers (see column 3, lines 57-58). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Menashe's interactive computerised gaming system with remote terminals and Alcorn's electronic casino gaming apparatus with Vuong's interactive real-time network gaming system for the purpose of improving the transmission of the data packets (see Menashe; column 7, line 54 to column 8, line 3).

Claims 13, 20 and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 5,762,552 granted to Vuong et al and further in view of U.S. patent 5,643,086 granted to Alcorn et al, U.S. patent 5,586,937 granted to Menashe and U.S. patent 5,830,069 granted to Soltesz et al.

Regarding claim 13, Vuong et al, Alcorn et al and Menashe discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 12), however, all three fail to specifically teach the communications network for the gaming system is the Internet. Soltesz teaches a wide area network that uses the

Internet for conducting gaming activities (see column 1, lines 54-67). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Soltesz's wide area network gaming with Menashe's interactive computerized gaming system with remote terminals, Alcorn's electronic casino gaming apparatus and with Vuong's interactive real-time network gaming system for the purpose of providing a connection medium that is relatively cheap and easy to configure for the average consumer.

Regarding claim 20, Vuong et al, Alcorn et al, Menashe and Soltesz et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 13), in addition, Soltesz teaches a wide are network using broadcast satellite systems (see column 1, lines 57-67).

Regarding claim 33, Vuong et al and Alcorn et al discloses everything claimed as applied below (see claim 32), in addition, Alcorn includes a CD-ROM means for containing the gaming software (see column 3, lines 6-10).

Claims 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 5,762,552 granted to Vuong et al and further in view of U.S. patent 5,643,086 granted to Alcorn et al and U.S. patent 5,323,322 granted to Mueller et al.

Regarding claim 15, Vuong et al and Alcorn et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 14). Vuong teaches a VSAT transmission network (see column 6, lines 29-31) but fails to specifically teach a global positioning satellite locating system. Mueller teaches VSAT (very small aperture terminals) datalinks operate by using satellite transmissions from a GPS

constellation (see column 13, column 28-36). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Mueller's networked GPS system with Alcorn's electronic gaming apparatus with Vuong's interactive real-time network gaming system for the purpose of monitoring and tracking the location of a player to ensure that the player is abiding by the rules of their particular jurisdiction.

Regarding claim 16, Vuong et al, Alcorn et al and Mueller discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 15), in addition, Vuong teaches synchronizing player terminals to produce evidence of time in which gaming activity takes place, the location of where the data was communicated from and means for confirming receipt of wager data (see column 15, line 56 to column 16, line 49).

Claim 25 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 5,762,552 granted to Vuong et al and further in view of U.S. patent 5,643,086 granted to Alcorn et al and U.S. patent 5,586,937 granted to Menashe.

Regarding claim 25, Vuong et al and Alcorn et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 24), however, Vuong fails to specifically teach using a personal identification number assigned to a particular player. Menashe teaches players who wish to play games of chance from a remote site are allocated a personal password in order to access the system (see column 6, lines 2-18). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Menashe's interactive computerized gaming

system with remote terminals Alcorn's electronic gaming apparatus with Vuong's interactive real-time network gaming system for the purpose of monitoring, tracking and auditing the activity of a player's account.

Claim 29 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 5,762,552 granted to Vuong et al and further in view of U.S. patent 5,643,086 granted to Alcorn et al and U.S. patent 5,323,322 granted to Mueller et al.

Regarding claim 29, Vuong et al and Alcorn et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 26). Vuong teaches a VSAT transmission network (see column 6, lines 29-31) but fails to specifically teach a global positioning satellite locating system. Mueller teaches VSAT (very small aperture terminals) datalinks operate by using satellite transmissions from a GPS constellation (see column 13, column 28-36). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Mueller's networked GPS system with Alcorn's electronic gaming apparatus and Vuong's interactive real-time network gaming system for the purpose of monitoring and tracking the location of a player to ensure that the player is abiding by the rules of their particular jurisdiction.

Claim 31 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 5,762,552 granted to Vuong et al and further in view of U.S. patent 5,586,937 granted to Menashe.

Regarding claim 31, Vuong et al discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 21), however, Vuong fails to specifically teach using modems in the network. Menashe teaches modems connected to each computer to facilitate communication between the computers along a telecommunication link (see column 3, lines 57-58). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Menashe's interactive computerized gaming system with remote terminals with Vuong's interactive real-time network gaming system for the purpose of improving the transmission of the data packets (see Menashe; column 7, line 54 to column 8, line 3).

Claim 32 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 5,762,552 granted to Vuong et al and further in view of U.S. patent 5,586,937 granted to Menashe and U.S. patent 5,830,069 granted to Soltesz et al.

Regarding claim 32, Vuong et al and Menashe discloses everything claimed as applied above (see claim 31), however, both fail to specifically teach the communications network for the gaming system is the Internet. Soltesz teaches a wide area network that uses the Internet for conducting gaming activities (see column 1, lines 54-67). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Soltesz's wide area network gaming with Menashe's interactive computerized gaming system with remote terminals and with Vuong's interactive real-time network gaming system for the purpose of

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providing a connection medium that is relatively cheap and easy to configure for the average consumer.

Conclusion

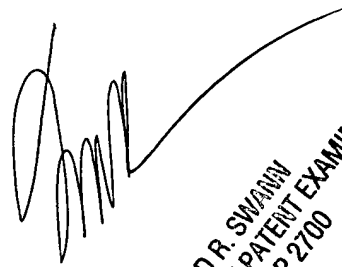
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew Smithers, whose telephone number is (703) 308-9293. The examiner can normally be reached Monday-Thursday from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. EST. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tod Swann, can be reached at (703) 308-7791.

The fax number for formal or official faxes to Technology Center 2700 is (703) 308-9051 or 9052. All draft or informal faxes for this Art Unit can be submitted to (703) 305-0040.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-3900.

Matthew Smithers

September 9, 1999



TOD R. SWANN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
GROUP 2700